

**Plains Community Council**  
**Meeting held Tuesday May 10th 2016 at 7.00pm**  
**Plains Community Centre**

**Present:** Jan Stewart (JS), Andy Stewart (AS), Harry Wilson (HW), Eileen Grier (EG), Ann Patricia Kane (APK), Jim Walker (JW), Elaine Tennent (ET), Mary Doris (MD), Eileen Grier (EG)

**Attending:** Cllr Morgan, Jim Clothier, SEPA Officer(JC), David Sandford, SEPA Officer(DS), Andy MacKenzie, NLC Waste Management(AMK), Stephen Murray, Community Sergeant Police Scotland(SM), Residents from Plains: John Grant, George Blair, Rita Blair, Allan Jaap, Patrick Lavelle, J Lavelle, Mitch Kellock, Fay Kellock, George McCracken, Angela McCracken, John Riley, Elaine Riley, Melissa Keyes, Anne Mallon, Laura McFadyen, Tina McFadyen, Kevin Rennie, Jim Eadie, Caldercruix Residents from Caldercruix: W McNeil, Michelle Gillespie, Anne Marie McCabe, Greengairs Community Council members: Maria Donovan(Chair), Ann Coleman, Helen Laird. Chapelhall Resident Louise Whomes.

**1. Apologies:** Fay Kerr, Cllr Beveridge

**2. Previous Minutes:** Proposed: JW Seconded: JS

**3. Matters Arising:**

Gordon White had returned CC laptop to chair. Due to personal circumstances he is unable to undertake secretarial responsibilities. Informed by chair he can continue as a co-opted member of the CC, and advised to contact chair on any decision on this. Mobile phone passed ET to EG for May/June period. Still no calls received. JW to advertise again on Face Book and request any necessary contact from residents. Jim agreed to use chair's end of year report for brief items of information on Face Book

**4. Police Report:**

Reported crimes 12<sup>th</sup> April – 10<sup>th</sup> May:

1 theft, 4 assaults, 1 possession of drugs (cannabis resin), 1 Breach of Bail Conditions, 2 Breach of the Peace, 1 vandalism, 1 Road Traffic incident (careless driving).

Complaints from members:

Speeding on Meadowhead Road continues despite safety measures/signs being put in place by NL Road Safety Dept. Police will continue to monitor the situation JS reported incident of motorbike being driven at speed on wrong side of the road. Police will continue to monitor the situation.

Police are making continuous efforts to address this ongoing problem, but the imposed 'no chasing' rule in the interests of their own and public safety. Police still very dependent on identification of culprits to help them to address the problem.

Drivers are using Arbuckle Road as a travel shortcut between Airdrie and Caldercruix. A speed trap was suggested by a member. SM stated statistics needed to put this in place, so people have to report incidents of this to the police to warrant an investigation into the problem. Police will carry out a site visit to monitor.

SM informed members that he had no feedback yet on queries made at April meeting but would contact MD with any information he received.

**5. Greengairs Landfill (Odour):**

MD felt it might be helpful to give some background information on the history of Greengairs Landfill, particularly in relation to its present waste resource value in relation to the Scottish Govt's proposed plan for Zero Waste:

Govt's proposed plan is based on the European Community Directive – it is not an option, but an 'order'. Similarly Regional and Local Government proposed strategies for zero waste must align with the Scottish Govt's National Waste Plan/Strategy. NL is one local authority which, along with another seven local authorities, constitutes the Glasgow and Clyde Valley Regional group. Under Government directive, they have to work together to decide on strategy/planning to achieve the Govt's set targets to reduce the capacity of waste to landfill through putting in place the new technologies required for the recovery, treatment and recycling/reuse of waste.

Further Government waste strategy directives to regional and local authorities include:

No new landfills to be created. Any additional void space in existing landfill is to be used.

Where possible, co-location on landfill sites of new technology (mechanical plants, incinerators)

From 1989 till 2014 Greengairs original capacity of circa 40 million tones was reduced to 13.6 million tones, by far the greatest capacity in the Glasgow and Clyde Valley Waste Strategy group (8 local authorities). The depositing, recycling and recovery of waste is based on cross-border agreements between member authorities of The Glasgow and Clyde Valley local authority group. Greengairs Landfill with its huge remaining capacity must be a key asset in the group's waste strategy. Agreements for to be made under National Waste strategy's BPEO (Best Practical Environmental Option) directive. In the case of NL and Greengairs Landfill, it was probably the ONLY practical environmental option. In 2012 Glasgow City Council were refused a time extension by South Lanarkshire Council to deposit waste at Cathkin landfill in South Lanarkshire because of constant complaints from residents against the operator's breach of planning regulations. An appeal to the Scottish Ministers was refused on the grounds that alternative space was available. Thereafter Glasgow City Council agreed a 5 year £10 million pound contract with FCC to deposit waste at Greengairs.

Local authorities do not have the knowledge or the finances to put in place the new technology needed to achieve Zero Waste targets imposed on them, so have to enlist the expertise and investment of huge (global) waste companies like FCC to provide and operate the new technologies. They are a business company and cannot be constrained from seeking an agreement on private contracts providing they remain the capacity limit granted by NLC. Community benefits/environmental enhancement are a matter between the company and its host communities. MD not aware of any such benefits to Plains' village. In the hierarchy of the twelve Zero Waste objectives, community benefits are ninth.

In view of all of the above MD suggested that the objective of the meeting should be the issue of odour and not the existence of the landfill itself.

In response to comments and questions put to them from CC members and attending residents SEPA Officers stated:

Void linings have a lifespan of 20 years.

Greengairs Landfill is a non-hazardous waste facility. Further questioning clarified that it had a cell for bonded asbestos but did not take clinical waste of any sort – this went to hazardous waste facility at Avondale.

SEPA monitor and regulate all types of waste deposited at landfill, not just municipal waste.

The odour emitted from the landfill is not methane gas which is odourless, but landfill gas from biodegradable waste. Causes can be cold/frosty ground conditions which cause cracks in the capping and lead to odour emissions. Direction of odour is determined by direction of prevailing winds. Comment made in response to this was that in a Scottish climate with ground frost conditions for half of the year or more, any permanent solution to odour would be, if possible at all.

SEPA stated that officers visited the landfill site 6 times a year to monitor and regulate. The general response was that this SEPA was totally inadequate. One of the officers stated that they were working under manpower constraints in that they only had 50 officers to deal with the whole of the West of Scotland. Response was they had just admitted inadequacy. Again the SEPA managerial officer refuted the accusation.

SEPA were allowed 24 hours to answer complaints on odour. It was put to officers that this was also unacceptable given the probable change in prevailing wind direction over this allowed period of response time. Residents also expressed resentment that the operator was given adequate time to resolve any operative problems.

SEPA have equipment to monitor gas emissions but not odour. JW asked, given that we live in an age of high technology, if SEPA were aware of any such technology to monitor landfill odours on site. SEPA Officers said they were not aware of any such devices. JW asked if they would look into the matter and get back to him. SEPA consented to do this.

Comment was made that all Areas of Air Quality Management in NL were traffic congestion locations with high CO2 emissions. Given the now determined lifespan of Greengairs Landfill being 57 years, should it not qualify as an Area of Air Quality Management? Response was that other landfills had operated for this length of time. Counter response was they had nowhere near the waste capacity of Greengairs. No response was given.

In response to MD's statement that she was finding it impossible to access data online for the tonnage of waste deposited at the landfill in the last few years, both municipal and private. AMK (NL Waste Management) said NL only held data for its own municipal waste streams. SEPA stated that FCC pass recorded levels of waste to them and agreed to pass this info on to MD. Officers also advised that an alternative way of finding this information was to access it under a Freedom of Information request.

FCC is not constrained to local authority contracts – the company is free to undertake contracts with private waste companies.

AMK informed meeting that waste was also being exported from Greengairs Landfill. Virador exports 71 thousand tons of waste per annum from the landfill for treatment. Residual waste is then dealt with at the company's incinerator at Dunbar.

In response to a question put to SEPA Officers, they said landfill operators had only been fined twice for breach of

regulations in 25 years. MD stated that article read based on dirty polluters (from figures from SEPA), revealed that WRG, now merged with FOCSA (a subsidiary of FCC) into FCC Ltd, were fined in 2009, 2010, and 2011 for breach of planning regulations including excessive emissions of odour. There was no response to this.

MD called a halt to discussion on this agenda item because of time constraints. She thanked SEPS officers for taking the time to attend the meeting.

#### **6. NLC Report: Report by Cllr Morgan:**

The recent crisis experienced by schools in Edinburgh arose due to structural faults attributed to the builders, Miller Construction. He assured meeting there was no such problem in North Lanarkshire. Schools here were built by Balfour Beatty and NLC employed independent services of building control authorities to survey building work, with continuous inspection of the work being done. He also stressed that the problem in Edinburgh was the way the schools were built, not the way they were financed.

The housing stock in Plains has never looked so positive

Tillicoultry Quarries have lodged an appeal with the Scottish Government to overturn the refusal, by NL Planning, to an extension of Hillend Quarry.

#### **Moffat View 'Sink Hole':**

Cllr Morgan passed on information NL had received from NL Corporate Communications regarding this problem. The most likely cause of sinkage of the road and high level escape of water was a broken sewer. Further subsistence was very unlikely. Work was continuing on a daily basis by the appropriate authorities to repair the broken sewer, and to ensure public safety remained a priority.

Residents, especially those from Moffat View and Killearn Crescent were not happy with the information given and made the following complaints to Councillor Morgan:

- a) The length of time (nearly two months to date) it had taken authorities to address the problem was unacceptable, and there was still no definitive answer to the root source of the problem.
- b) The park area adjacent to the collapsed road area and the new pathway had been in a continual state of flooding for years, and the problem had never fully been addressed.
- c) NL had built a wooden bridge across a deep water area in the park some years ago. A seven year old girl slipped and fell off the bridge and nearly drowned. It took NL two days to respond to this occurrence.
- d) Authorities involved had been pumping water from the void into the adjacent park area for seven weeks, substantially increasing the depth of the water. Since the park is already flooded, this water has no place to go. IT is already leaking out from the pavement edge back on to the road.
- e) The urban drainage system was assessed ten years ago as being in poor condition and badly in need of comprehensive repair.
- f) Amount of flooding in the village, especially in northern and eastern areas is unacceptable. NL aware of this, but CC has been informed in the past that the cost to NL of fully addressing the problem is prohibitive.
- g) Problem might be associated with the historic mining hydrogeology of the land with water rising from underground mine shafts and aquifers disturbed by recent housing and heavy industrial development at the landfill.
- h) The operation of the landfill surrounded by saturated peat/bog landscape and using the main drainage system to receive its foul water could have been a contributory factor.

#### **Councillor Morgan's response to complaints:**

He was, in his capacity as local councillor obliged to pass on information he received to the community. It was not North Lanarkshire's responsibility to address and solve the situation. This was the responsibility of Scottish Water and other authorities, including SEPA. North Lanarkshire was involved as an interested authority since the event occurred within North Lanarkshire. The pathway might have been a contributory factor in the occurrence of the incidence. He insisted that landfill drainage had no connection with the problem.

Attending residents were still dissatisfied with the situation. Their conclusion was, one again, that authorities/Services/ are not getting to the root of the causes of the void and the long term and ongoing flooding in the village, particularly in the park area. They are simply 'papering over the cracks'.

SEPA officers could provide no information since they had not attended the incident site. They said they would contact the attending officers with a request to inform CC, via MD, of findings on the situation and how it was being

addressed. MD thanked them for this.

MD again had to stop discussion on the issue due to constraints of time. She advised residents that Cllr Morgan held three surgeries every month in the community centre if they wanted to discuss concerns further with him. Cllr Morgan stated he would be happy to discuss the matter further with individual residents and would leave his contact details for anyone who wanted them.

**7. Treasurer's Report:**

Account balance: £2058.55 (£500 ring fenced)

EG informed meeting that she had spoken to NL and NL Auditors of CC accounts re honoraria payment of £200 to MD for past services. Permission was given for the payment subject to the recorded agreement of members at a CC meeting. Members readily agreed.

EG also informed members that an annual honoraria payment could be made to Chair, Secretary and Treasurer. Nothing has been claimed prior to present session, since MD was elected to the position of Chair four years ago, but EG will attend to this in future sessions.

**8. Correspondence:** Dealt with under landfill and NLC Report agenda Items above.

**9. A.O.C.B:**

Cllr Morgan Confirmed that the Gala Day would go ahead. The flooded Moffat View park area would be fenced off by NLC to ensure public safety.

**10. D.O.N.M:** 14<sup>th</sup> June 2016